

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-35 were pending and rejected. In this response, no claim has been canceled. Claims 9 and 34 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-5, 8, 10-13, 15-17, 22-24, 27-30, and 34-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,169,986 of Bowman et al. ("Bowman").

It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-35 include limitations that are not disclosed by Bowman. Specifically, for example, independent claim 1 recites as follows:

1. A method comprising:
receiving a search term for a query;
searching a network of concept terms for terms related to the search term;
reformulating the query using the search term and the related terms before
performing a search for documents based on the search term;
searching a local database for data terms that match the search term and the
related terms based on a predetermined relationship, wherein the data
terms are generated from documents residing on websites located on
servers connected to, wherein the predetermined relationship includes a
weight factor based on a ratio of an occurrence frequency of both the
search term and the related terms over an occurrence frequency of the
search term within the documents; and
in response to matching data terms with the search terms and related terms
corresponding to the data terms, retrieving the documents from the
respective websites.

(Emphasis added)

Independent claim 1 includes limitations of searching a network of concept terms for terms related to a search term, reformatting a query using the search term and the related terms found in the network of concept terms, and searching a local database for data terms that match the search term and the related terms. The data terms are generated from documents found around the Web sites across a network based on a predetermined relationship of the

search term and the related terms using a weight factor calculated based on a ratio of an occurrence frequency of both the search term and the related terms over an occurrence frequency of the search term within the documents. It is respectfully submitted that the above limitations are absent from Bowman.

The Office Action stated that col. 7, lines 1-41 of Bowman discloses some of the above limitations (see 7/27/2005 Office Action, page 3). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Specifically, Bowman states:

“As illustrated by FIG. 1, each entry within the correlation table 137 (two entries shown) has two primary components: a "key" term 140, and a "related terms" list 142 for that key term. The related terms list 142 is a list of the N (e.g. 50) query terms that have appeared within the same query as the keyword with the highest degree of frequency, and is ordered according to frequency.

...

In addition, each related term is stored together with a correlation score 146 which, in the preferred embodiment, indicates the number of times the related term has appeared in combination with the key term (within the search fields indicated by their respective field prefixes), not counting queries that produced a NULL query result.”

(Bowman, col. 7, lines 4 to 31, emphasis added)

Thus, although Bowman mentioned the highest degree of frequency and the number of times the related terms appear with the key terms, Bowman still fails to disclose a weight factor that is determined based on a ratio of an occurrence frequency of both the search term and the related terms over an occurrence frequency of the search term within the documents. That is, the weight factor is determined at least in part on a ratio the frequency of both search term and the related terms occurred over (e.g., divided) the frequency of the search term within the documents found from the Web sites.

In addition, the number of times the related term has appeared in combination with the key term of Bowman are those entered in “the search fields indicated by their respective field

prefixes”, as shown in Fig. 2 of Bowman. This is not the same as the search terms and related terms found in documents collected from the Web sites.

In order to anticipate a claim, each and every limitations of the claim must be taught by the cited reference. It is respectfully submitted that Bowman fails to disclose the limitations set forth above. Therefore, for the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Bowman.

Similarly, independent claims 10, 15, 19, 22, and 27 include limitations similar to those recited in claim 1. Thus, for the reasons similar to those discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 10, 15, 19, 22, and 27 are not anticipated by Bowman. Given that the rest of the claims depend from one of the above independent claims, it is respectfully submitted that the rest of the claims are not anticipated by Bowman.

Furthermore, with respect to claim 35, claim 35 recites as follows:

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the mutual information (MI) of the search term x and the related terms y is determined by $MI(x, y) = f(x,y) / f(x) + f(y) - f(x, y)$, wherein $f(x, y)$ corresponds to an occurrence frequency of both search term and the related terms, wherein $f(x)$ corresponds to an occurrence frequency of the search term, and wherein $f(y)$ corresponds to an occurrence frequency of the related terms.

Thus, claim 35 recites a specific algorithm to determine the weight factor, which is absent from Bowman. The Office Action stated that col. 7, lines 1-41 of Bowman (see above) discloses such specific limitations (see 7/27/2005 Office Action, page 6).

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Nowhere in the cited section of Bowman discloses the limitations set forth in claim 35. Any such suggestion can only be found based on the impermissible hindsight of the present application. Therefore, in addition to those applied to its independent claim, claim 35 is independently not anticipated by Bowman.

Claims 6-7, 9, 19-21, 25-26, and 31-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,933,822 of Braden-Harder et al.

(“Braden”). Claims 14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowman in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,460,029 of Fries et al. (“Fries”).

Claims 6-7, 9, 19-21, 25-26, and 31-32 include, directly or indirectly, the limitations set forth above. It is respectfully submitted that neither Barden nor Freis discloses or suggests the limitations set forth above. Therefore, for the reasons similar to those discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 6-7, 9, 19-21, 25-26, and 31-32 are patentable over the cited references. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits the present application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite or assist in the allowance of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (408) 720-8300.

Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any shortage of fees in connection with this response.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN

Date: 10/27/2005



Kevin G. Shao
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 45,095

12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025-1026
(408) 720-8300